

Worst Case Scenario

by S.H. Gall

Tall, well-built black man. T-shirt, gym shorts, sneakers with no laces per protocol.

Speaks fast, lucid at times, scrambled at others, highly articulate but frantic with despair. His faith tells him this is his last stop. After that he leaves unsaid.

His past precedes him, and no female can trust him with even a friendly compliment. The voices he hears are God and the Devil and he knows the difference. Therefore, he is not mentally ill.

Until he was sixteen he was raised by his mom, and after that his sister became his mom. At thirty-five years of age he is not able to accept twenty year old nurses with no life experience telling him what to do. He knows he has problems with authority, especially with those who have earned no authority status. His mother loves him, his brother too, but they have left him to fend for himself. They feel that is healthier than saving him all the time.

The hospital staff said if he refused to take medication orally, he would be injected with it. *What if I was a Muslim and I was forced to eat pork, he says. That is a violation of my religion. I don't need these medications. They are a violation of my person.*

I was having sex with men because I was out of my mind. I didn't know head from tail and I had sex with other men who were the same way. God blessed me by not giving me AIDS. I want a wife and children, I want to be a productive member of society, but I'm stuck in the system.

He served five years in prison for attempted rape, which he didn't commit. He didn't even touch the white girl. If he was a white man

and she had been black, there wouldn't have been any big deal.

At one point, he was sent to live in a LTSR, where the structure made it possible for him to lead a productive existence. For a year, he worked at a job. He spent half his money on goodies. Chips and candy bars. When he left the facility, he spent the other half on beer, cigarettes and marijuana. The way he used the term "goodies" damn near broke my heart.

He wants to live in an apartment close to his mother, even though she locks her door specifically to keep him out. Family is important to him.

He can bench 300 pounds, he's thirty-five years old, he should be educated and working at a job as a welder or something. He went to community college for a semester until he was accused of rape, dismissed from school, sent to jail.

For the entire half hour he speaks with me his voice cracks on the verge of tears. He doesn't let them appear, probably the reason he talks so fast. Staying one second ahead of the dreaded weep.

